

Kentucky Teacher

March 2007

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

www.education.ky.gov

Willetta Cornette
Hacker Elementary School (Clay County)
42 years in the classroom



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

It's a small world

Taylor Skrine holds a cutout of Europe as she and classmates in Dawn Astrom's early primary classroom at Foster Heights Elementary (Nelson County) sing a song about the world's seven continents. Students learned the names of the continents as they sang and held either a cutout or blue streamers to represent the oceans in the same geographical ratio as their models, the world map and the globe.

Task force releases plan to improve college readiness

A statewide plan approved by the Developmental Education Task Force of the Council on Postsecondary Education is designed to improve college readiness and success for Kentucky students. The task force's report, "Securing Kentucky's Future: A Plan for Improving College

Readiness and Success," outlines six core recommendations to reduce the number of underprepared students entering postsecondary education and to better support and retain students who enter postsecondary studies underprepared.

According to the report, more than half of first-time freshmen entering Kentucky's colleges are underprepared in at least one subject. Of those underprepared students, the first-year college dropout rate is twice the rate of academically prepared freshmen.

"The recommendations contained in this report are critical in our collective pursuit to increase educational attainment to the national average by 2020," said John Turner, council chair and chair of the task force. To do so, Kentucky must double the number of college-educated citizens by 2020.

The six core recommendations of the plan include:

- update college admissions regulations to define standards for college readiness

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Podcasting: a cool new technology tool in education

By Rebecca Blessing

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Move over, Beyonce. Make way, Kelly Clarkson. Step aside, Justin Timberlake.

Now, in addition to popular music, more and more Kentucky students are downloading school events and class projects to their computers and MP3 players.

You've probably heard about podcasting. In 2005, The New Oxford American Dictionary declared "podcasting" its word of the year and defined it as "a digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program, made available on the Internet for downloading to a personal audio player."

The word comes from the combination of "iPod," Apple computer's portable media player, and the word "broadcasting." Despite the implication of its name, a podcast can be downloaded to either a computer or portable MP3 player (not just an iPod). It

can consist of audio, video or both.

Bullitt County technology teacher Matt Murphy became interested in podcasting last fall. Though he had owned an iPod for a year, he was unfamiliar with the concept of podcasting. He took it as a personal challenge to find out what it was and how podcasting could benefit his students and the faculty at Bernheim Middle School (Bullitt County).

"Podcasting is a powerful tool for creating, disseminating and delivering educational content to students and the public," said Murphy.

Across the country, an increasing number of elementary and secondary schools – including schools here in Kentucky – are starting to utilize podcasting as an instructional tool and to involve parents and com-

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State board gives its final OK to school accountability formula

By Cathy Lindsey

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The state's new formula for determining school accountability – including the ACT – is on track to be used with assessments administered this spring. At its February meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education reviewed comments from a public hearing about the accountability regulation and agreed to accept the final Statement of Consideration approved by the board in December.

The new formula is a result of Senate Bill 130, passed during the 2006 General Assembly. The law requires that the ACT exam be administered to students in grade 11. It also requires that the state's accountability system include scores from ACT's high school readiness exam, EXPLORE, in

grade 8 and PLAN, ACT's college readiness exam for 10th graders. The law established that these exams be used in lieu of a norm-referenced test at the secondary level.

Under the approved plan, scores from the ACT exams will account for 5 percent of the high school accountability score during this school year based on scores computed from the PLAN exam. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, the ACT will count as 5 percent of the high school accountability score computed from both PLAN and ACT scores.

The Kentucky Department of Education is currently overseeing a study of alignment and integration issues with the ACT and the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT).

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Bulletin Board



Shelby County Area Technology Center

Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Conferences

Great Kids Summit

The 4th annual Great Kids Summit will take place June 28-30 at the Galt House East in Louisville. The summit showcases and celebrates the five promises every child needs for a successful start in life. Focus of the 2007 summit is "developing marketable skills."

www.kychildnow.org/summit/index.html

Autism Institute 2007

The Kentucky Autism Training Center, part of the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Louisville, presents Autism Institute 2007 June 20-22 at the Galt House in Louisville. A variety of full-day sessions include "How to Create a Teacher-ParaPro Dream Team."

Contact: Kristen Frarey, (800) 334-8635, Ext. 852-4631, kristen.frarey@louisville.edu

www.louisville.edu/kyautismtraining

Kentucky History Education Conference call for presenters

This year's Kentucky History Education Conference is scheduled for July 24 at the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History in Frankfort. The event will focus on immigration and will include sessions on content and teaching ideas as well as time to see the center's new exhibit, "Our New Kentucky Home: The Immigrant Experience," which opens this spring. Educators are invited to propose hour-long sessions for the conference.

Contact: Vicky Middleswarth, (502) 564-1792, vicky.middleswarth@ky.gov

Safe Schools – Successful Students

Proposals to present a workshop at the 13th annual "Safe Schools – Successful Students" conference are due by April 20. The conference will be held Oct. 1 and 2 at the Galt House East in Louisville. The conference highlights best practices that emphasize the connection between school safety, student discipline and positive outcomes that are associated with safe and healthy learning environments.

www.kycss.org/clear/conferences

Events

Environmental education workshop

Educators who want to gain experience in environmental education are encouraged to sign up for the Project Learning Tree and Project Aquatic WILD Certification Training. It will be held April 28 at the Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery in Jamestown, KY. Cost is \$25. Teachers receive eight hours professional development credit. Registration deadline is April 3.

Contact: Amanda Patrick, (270) 343-3797, amanda_patrick@fws.gov

KCCT scoring opportunities

Current and former teachers can apply to be trained as readers to evaluate and assign scores to student open-response items on the Kentucky Core Content Test that will be administered this spring. Readers will be needed for reading, writing, mathematics, special education, arts and humanities, and social studies items. Kelly Services is scheduling interviews.

Work is projected to begin April 9 and continue into July. Various start/end dates and daytime and evening hours (as of May 16) will be available. A bachelor's degree, pre-qualification, accuracy and efficiency are required. Pay is \$11 an hour.

Contact: Heather Braden at Kelly Services, (502) 425-7131, BRADENH@kellyservices.com

Scholarships for counselor training

The Kentucky Counseling Association (KCA) is offering scholarships to educators who are interested in becoming school counselors but who have not yet met the certification requirements. Scholarship assistance includes both tuition and textbook expenses. KCA provides grants of \$100 for textbooks to the recipient and each participating university provides one tuition waiver for 2006 summer school. A list of participating universities, the scholarship application and more information is available on the KCA Web site. Application deadline is April 15.

www.kyca.org

Resources

Free art materials

The National Endowment for the Humanities' We the People program, "Picturing America," is making art curriculum materials available free of charge to 500 K-12 schools. The grant includes laminated posters depicting works of American art, related reading lists and a 100-page resource booklet with information about the paintings, sculpture, architecture and crafts. Online applications accepted through March 19.

<http://publicprograms.ala.org/picturingamerica>

Student writing contest

The Kentucky Association of School Administrators is sponsoring a writing contest for K-12 students. The topic of "Extreme Inspiration, Passion and Commitment" encourages students to write about a teacher, administrator, adult mentor or role model who has inspired them to believe in themselves and achieve at higher levels than they thought possible on their own. School-winning entries due by April 16.

www.kasa.org

2007 American Stars of Teaching

The nomination deadline for the 2007 American Stars of Teaching program is April 1. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the program is designed to honor exemplary classroom teachers who are using innovative teaching strategies to improve student achievement and positively shape their school environment.

www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html

Master's degrees in education and teaching available online

The University of the Cumberlands (formerly Cumberland College) is offering master of arts degrees in education and teaching completely online. The university is fully accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

www.elearnportal.com/cc

Elementary writing video

"Inside Writing Communities, Grades 3-5," a video workshop for elementary school teachers produced by KET, is now available. Teachers can use the search function on KET's Web site to access the broadcast schedule for the 16 half-hour professional development programs. They also can be viewed online.

www.ket.org

www.learner.org

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Commissioner's Comments

SAMs project helps principals be instructional leaders

By Kevin Noland

Interim Commissioner of Education

The school principal is of critical importance to the success or failure of school improvement. After all, "strong leadership" appears in nearly every list of attributes of successful schools.

Leadership also plays a prominent part in Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement. Standard 7 focuses on how much support principals and other school leaders provide for teaching and learning, setting high performance standards and creating a positive learning environment in their schools.

Yet, every day principals throughout Kentucky struggle to define their roles.

"How should I spend my time?" "What do students, teachers, parents, and council and board members expect of me?" "What should be at the top of my to-do list?"

The advent of education reform in Kentucky and the growth of standards-based accountability have only served to intensify the need to find answers to those questions.

In a 2000 report, after citing a long list of the principal's traditional managerial responsibilities, the Institute for Education Leadership went on to add:

"Principals today must also serve as leaders for student learning. They must know academic content and pedagogical techniques. They must work with teachers to strengthen skills. They must collect, analyze and use data in ways that fuel excellence. They must rally students, teachers, parents, local health and family service agencies, youth development groups, local businesses and other community residents and partners around the common goal of raising student performance. And they must have the leadership skills and knowledge to exercise the autonomy and authority to pursue these strategies."

Principals in Kentucky and across the nation say they feel torn between the instructional leadership role that almost everyone agrees should be the top priority and the daily management chores that are nearly impossible to ignore. Often, out of necessity, the managerial responsibilities take precedence. Yet, principals are still held accountable for the continuous educational progress of all P-12 students.

The question is: Has the principalship evolved to integrate these new instructional responsibilities or are these new duties being layered on to what was already there? Most suggest the latter and say the job may have become impossible for all but a few "superleaders."

In Kentucky, the Department of Education is addressing this issue head-on. Principals in five Kentucky school districts

are participating in an alternative school administration model that is being watched closely nationwide.

In 2003, the Wallace Foundation funded a study in three Jefferson County elementary schools to examine the question of time in a principal's day and to test the impact of an alternative school administration model. The model provides for a new position at the school level, a School Administration Manager or SAM.

The idea is for this classified staff member to take on responsibility for day-to-day school management. The SAM, who may be hired with a business but not education background, handles things like bus transportation, student discipline,

parent phone calls, expenditure requests and the principal's schedule.

Data collected at the onset of the Jefferson County project proved what everyone had suspected: those principals spent the majority of the school day, nearly 70 percent, on managerial duties, and less than 30 percent on instructional duties. A year later, the three schools employing the SAMs showed a reverse in the numbers: about 70 percent of the principal's time was being spent on instruction, less than 30 percent on managerial issues.

In 2006, the Kentucky Department of Education, in cooperation with the State Action Education Leadership Project (SAELP), expanded the study to seven elementary schools in four districts. The statewide SAM project is funded by a grant from the Wallace Foundation, the Kentucky Department of Education and the financial support of local school districts. At the same time, Jefferson County committed to funding SAMs

at five more elementary schools.

It should be noted that the SAM project goes far beyond simply adding a certified position in a school. The KDE/SAELP Principals and SAMs receive extensive training.

During a weeklong academy last summer, these school leaders studied a wide variety of school issues, some instructional, some managerial, some interpersonal. Training on strategies like skilled classroom observation, preparing performance feedback and one-on-one coaching continues throughout this school year. The goal is not only to give principals the time it takes to be instructional leaders, but to equip them with the skills they need to be effective instructional leaders.

Data in the statewide study mimics that of the Jefferson County study. At the onset of the statewide study, principals spent most of their time on management issues and very little time on instruction. Once the SAMs were in place, that division of time started to change because principals and SAMs sit down on a regular basis to discuss schedules and time spent on instruction versus management issues.

All of the principals in the study now spend at least 60 percent of their time on instruction; some spend as much as 80 percent. As time goes by, those numbers are expected to increase.

As part of this alternative school administration study, anecdotal evidence also is being collected. A survey of students, teachers, staff and parents gauges perception of the principal's job both before and after the SAM is on board. So far the responses show that principals once viewed as disciplinarians or school managers are now seen as the school's instructional leader.

"I can't imagine being in this position without her," said Principal Amber Thurman of School Administration Manager Kathy Ross. They split their time between the two campuses of Abraham Lincoln Ele-

mentary (LaRue County). "It makes my job so much more enjoyable because I can go in and focus on the stuff that matters and not have to worry about all the little details. That's been a blessing."

"I love having her (Thurman) in the classroom," said teacher Tina Southwood. "It's like having another teacher. A lot of times when I'm teaching something, she'll just jump into the lesson, or I'll ask her a question about it. It's great."

Parent and school volunteer Rhonda Smith likes the change. "I think it's a big plus for the principal to be in the classroom. It helps give support to the teachers, and I think the kids really enjoy it. It helps build their self-esteem to know that not just the teacher, but the principal is behind them."

The staff at Abraham Lincoln Elementary also has positive things to say about the alternative school administration model. They say Ross is able to be more responsive to administrative needs that arise because that's her job and she's not struggling with also trying to devote time to instruction.

Ross was a teacher at Abraham Lincoln Elementary. She can't believe one person was ever asked to do the job she and Thurman now split.

"It seems I get three things done and seven more things get piled on my plate," said Ross. "I'll come to work with a list of 10 things I want to get done by ten o'clock, and I'm lucky to get two of them done before 20 more things get added to my plate."

But she's not complaining. She just hopes the fact that Thurman is able to spend more time in the classroom and more time working with teachers will translate into higher achievement for the students. That, after all, is the bottom line.

Kentucky's SAM project is generating a lot of excitement not only among our principals but also school leaders throughout the nation. Six states have joined the study employing SAMs at all school levels.

According to state SAELP Director Debbie Daniels, next year the Kentucky SAELP plans to double or possibly triple the number of schools in the project while expanding it to middle and high schools. The Jefferson County Board of Education is including funding for an additional 20 SAMs in its draft budget for next year. Everyone agrees the study shows a lot of promise.

If all goes well, it looks as if Kentucky could help serve as a catalyst for change, for a new kind of principalship in the nation's public schools. Only time will tell.

Still, through the alternative school administration study, our educational leaders are helping focus national attention on the vital role that principals play in the school improvement process and their importance as effective instructional leaders.

If you would like more information on the SAM project in Kentucky, contact Debbie Daniels in our Office of Leadership and School Improvement at (502) 564-4201 or debbie.daniels@education.ky.gov.



Noland

Photo by Creative Services



Principal Amber Thurman, left, and School Administration Manager Kathy Ross regularly take time to discuss their schedules and review their work at Abraham Lincoln Elementary, a P-4 school with two campuses in LaRue County.

Photo by Freddie Newby, LaRue County Public Schools

Mathematics teachers find they are their own best resources

By Cathy Lindsey

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Education experts agree that today's students need a solid foundation in mathematics to compete in the global job market. Yet, according to the U.S. Department of Education, the nation's 15-year-olds rank 24th in mathematics literacy and problem solving when compared to their peers in 29 developed nations.

Enter the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, which was created by the 2005 General Assembly and is housed at Northern Kentucky University. Drawing on the expertise of Kentucky mathematics educators and mathematicians, the center provides research-based training and support to public school teachers of mathematics at locations across the state. The center has launched two programs to train teachers to help struggling mathematics students and to help other teachers improve their content and instructional skills.

Intervention programs and diagnostic assessment

The diagnostic assessment and intervention programs focus on showing teachers how to help students be successful in mathematics. Teachers learn to assess a child's current learning level and to appropriately adapt mathematics instruction to meet that child's needs.

The Mathematics Achievement Fund (MAF) allows schools to hire intervention teachers to

work with primary students who are struggling in mathematics. The center trains those teachers to use research-based intervention strategies. Forty-five mathematics intervention teachers are working in classrooms this school year and will continue through May 2008. An additional 40 participants will begin training this summer for the two-year program.

"These students need intense math intervention to build skills to become successful in the classroom," said Angela Miller, a mathematics intervention teacher at Sand Gap Elementary in Jackson County. "The program provides individualized instruction for these students."

The center offers training in two diagnostic intervention programs, Number Worlds and Math Recovery. Teachers can use other intervention programs provided the programs meet all the training and documentation criteria required by the MAF grant.

The center also facilitates teacher support throughout the school year. Some teachers meet monthly to share video clips of their instruction and to talk about improving instruction. Teachers also participate in a weekly online discussion group.

"The online support is great because you share ideas with other Math Recovery teachers, which makes your teaching stronger," said Tonda Thompson, a mathematics intervention teacher at Albany Elementary in Clin-

ton County. "The feedback (from monthly meetings) is always positive, and you leave feeling you have a close family to share new and innovative ways of teaching math."

Training in the Math Recovery program has changed the way Thompson thinks about teaching mathematics. "The focus is not on teaching math to young children, but how young children learn math," Thompson said.

The teacher must teach to the child and adjust the lesson to fit the child's needs at that time. The

vention training program can contact Alice Gabbard at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics. (See "MORE INFO" box on Page 9.)

Coaching helps other teachers

The mathematics coaching program trains teachers to help teachers. This program builds on research that suggests school-based, job-embedded training is the best way to sharpen teacher skills and transfer new teaching strategies to the classroom. Coaching training is available to teach-

teachers with the coaching skills needed to encourage teachers and build collaborative environments.

"Learning both strategies – how to help teachers teach and how to have the conversation with the teachers – has been paramount in the success with the math teachers at my school," said Gordon.

The center also provides follow-up training throughout the school year for the coaches. Regional coordinators, located at the eight state universities, offer additional field support.

"Knowing that there is a person who cares and is available to answer questions is comforting to me," Gordon said. "They (regional coordinators) can help alleviate stress in my job, which makes me a better math coach."

During weekly online meetings, coaches discuss coaching problems and possible solutions. They share information about Web sites and good coaching techniques. Gary Palmer, the center's director of coaching programs, leads a weekly online book discussion.

In their schools, coaches meet individually with teachers of mathematics on a regular basis. The coaching cycle includes a planning session with each teacher, observation and a follow-up session.

"A good coach allows three things to happen: consultation, collaboration and coaching," said McCree about her work in the Paducah elementary school. "Every teacher is unique and at a different place in his or her own development of teaching skills and philosophies. Having a math coach in a school allows each teacher to receive what he or she needs for further growth in these areas."

During the planning sessions, coaches ask questions that promote a positive interchange of ideas. Coaches will make notes during classroom observations based on those ideas. Afterward, coaches and teachers meet to reflect on the lesson. They talk about strategies used, what worked and didn't work and how to build on student learning in future lessons.

"Every teacher is giving more consideration of where today's concept will be needed down the road," said George Christoph, a mathematics coach at Pendleton County High School. "Every teacher is committed to reducing failures and improving test scores and has concrete plans of how goals can be accomplished."

Christoph credits his training as a coach to leading him to develop,



Susan Gordon, mathematics coach at East Jessamine County Middle School, and 8th-grade mathematics teacher David Nelson engage in a "problem-solving" conversation. Gordon uses questioning techniques and paraphrasing to help Nelson work through a problem teaching a concept to his students. In the foreground are resource materials mathematics coaches and teachers can use.

intervention teacher knows how to re-adjust the lesson at any point to help the child continue to grow and become successful, she said.

Thompson videotapes each lesson and reviews the recordings before planning her instruction for the following day.

"I compare it to a coach who breaks down game tapes in order to prepare for an upcoming game," she said. "I am studying how the child is doing math and prepare lessons to move her forward to a higher level of thinking. Rather than telling her how to do the math, I set the stage to allow her to discover different ways of learning. When a child discovers it for herself, she seems to understand."

Thompson said she is seeing students gain confidence in what they can achieve. Other mathematics intervention teachers echo the same sentiments.

"Students have suggested they feel more successful and more able to participate in the regular classroom after participating in the intervention program," said Miller of her students in Jackson County. "When students feel more successful, they become more actively engaged in the classroom."

Educators interested in learning more about the Mathematics Achievement Fund and the inter-

ers of mathematics at all levels.

"Studies have shown that coaching is the best way to effect change in teaching practices," said Kani McCree, a mathematics coach at Cooper-Whiteside Elementary (Paducah Independent). "Teachers must think and talk, both alone and together, to change their beliefs and skills."

The mathematics coaching program gives schools the ability to share the skills of a highly qualified peer with other teachers on a daily basis. "We offer a variety of services including modeling a lesson, co-teaching a lesson, planning, implementing and reflecting upon lessons, strategies for teaching, curriculum, information and assessment tools," said Susan Gordon, a mathematics coach at East Jessamine County Middle School.

Mathematics coaches complete an eight-day summer session to address coaching skills and mathematics content training. The center provides training in two programs, Math Solutions and Cognitive CoachingSM.

Math Solutions focuses on providing teachers with mathematics content knowledge and teaching strategies to help them create active learning environments and address multiple learning styles. Cognitive CoachingSM provides



Tonda Thompson, mathematics intervention teacher at Albany Elementary (Clinton County), guides Gracie Widau, second-year primary student, as Gracie begins sorting "arrow cards" to build the number 162.

Photos by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

See MATHEMATICS on Page 9



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Creating artifacts of the future

Tanner Smith, a student at Hacker Elementary (Clay County), uses markers to complete his drawing of artifacts that might be found in an archeological site in Kentucky in the year 3007. The enrichment activity was part of a unit in which the class studied archeological digs and artifacts from countries around the world.

Kentucky study examines effectiveness of online PD

Does high-quality online professional development improve classroom instruction? That's the question the U.S. Department of Education seeks to answer through an e-Learning Kentucky research study being conducted from spring 2007 through spring 2008.

Through the e-Learning Kentucky initiative, a partnership of the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Educational Television and the Education Professional Standards Board, the federal education agency is funding the study of online professional development for 4th- and 7th-grade English/language arts teachers and 5th- and 8th-grade mathematics teachers. Participants will be assigned to an experimental group or a control group, which will be given different tasks as part of the study.

All participants are eligible for 24 hours of professional development credit for each online course completed. Graduate credit is available at a reasonable per-credit fee.

Participants will receive a \$300 stipend for successful completion and an additional \$50 for recruiting another participant for the study.

MORE INFO ...

www.bc.edu/efe - for study information; click on red box to register
e-Learning Kentucky office, (866) 432-0008, Ext. 4540 or 4541 (toll free), (502) 564-4772, Ext. 4540 or 4541, elearningkyinquiry@education.ky.gov

2007 testing information

This spring, the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) in reading and mathematics will be administered to students in every grade 3-8. Accountability for the writing portfolio remains for students in grades 4 and 7. Fourth- and 7th-grade students also will be tested in science and practical living/vocational studies.

Students in grades 5 and 8 also will be tested in social studies, and arts and humanities. Fifth and 8th graders also will take the on-demand assessment.

Tenth-grade students will take assessments in reading and practical living/vocational studies. Students in the 11th grade will be assessed in mathematics, science, social studies, and arts and humanities content. Accountability for the writing portfolio remains at grade 12, as well as the on-demand writing assessment.

Teachers and students will notice a change in design of the 2007 KCCT. Assessments have more multiple-choice questions and fewer open-response questions.

All questions were developed using the "Kentucky Core Content for Assessment, Version 4.1." Questions also have been selected to measure a variety of depth of knowledge levels, which have been included in the revised core content document.

For more information about the 2007 spring CATS assessments, contact the Division of Assessment Support at (502) 564-4394, dacinfo@education.ky.gov.

Busting myths about state assessments can make testing easier for students

Anyone who has ever played the party game Broken Telephone knows that even the simplest statement gets garbled in transmission when it's repeated and restated from one person to another person to another. At the end of the game, the original message rarely comes out correct or even half incorrect.

In many respects, that's what has happened with information about state assessments in Kentucky. Statements get made and repeated throughout schools in the state's 175 school districts.

After several hundreds – or maybe thousands – of retellings, the resulting incorrect information takes on a life of its own. These myths become accepted as fact, and educators begin to use the myths in their instructional practices.

The Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Assessment and Accountability has been working this school year to dispel those myths during training sessions in preparation for the spring 2007 testing window. Students will take the state assessments between April 23 and May 4.

12 myths about assessment

The department's assessment staff has identified 12 myths that have been circulating throughout the state about testing in Kentucky. Below are the myths. The correct information about each assessment myth is printed in **bold type**.

- In open-response questions, restating the question is mandatory.
It is not required, but is acceptable to do.
- Restating an open-response question without further information will earn at least one point.
New or additional information must be included in the answer in order to receive any credit.
- A graphic organizer should be written on the response page.
Depending on the type of question being asked, a graphic organizer may not be the best way to record the answer. Best practice would be for students to use the organizer on scrap paper to plan their responses.
- Open-response answers must be in paragraph form.
Scorers are trained to focus on content and not address the format of the answer. An answer in any format – bulleted, labeled diagram or graphic organizer – will be scored. However, the nature of graphic organizers is to outline or abbreviate rather than to

give supporting information and/or explanations that are usually required by the questions.

- Doing more than required by the prompt will guarantee students a score of four.

A score of four requires the student's response to completely and accurately reflect the correct answer according to the scoring guide. Extra information is not required to score a four. If the extra information is inaccurate, it can prevent the responses from scoring a four.

- Students must use content-specific vocabulary in order to score a four.

If the content can be adequately expressed without the use of specific vocabulary, appropriate credit will be given to the response. Content vocabulary is required only if the question specifically asks for its use.

- Students must always give three or more examples.

The question will specify the number of examples required. Giving more examples will not increase the score.

- Scorers only have 30 seconds to score each item on an assessment.

Scorers can take as much time as needed to score each response.

- Released items are "bad" items that have been thrown out of the test.

The items are good to use in instruction and are representative of the test. Release is not based on how the item performed on previous test forms.

- "Strike throughs" on an open-response answer are better than erasing.

Scorers will score what is written on the page. Strike throughs may take up more space than erasing and leave less space to complete a proper response.

- Open-response answers will be scored using the new analytical scoring.

Each open-response item has a specific scoring guide/rubric. The question is scored for content and not writing mechanics.

- Reading and mathematics assessed at the newly added grades will be counted for only No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability.

For grades 3-8, all reading and mathematics test scores will be used for NCLB and Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) calculations.

Servant leadership: The Blanchard model

By Rocky Wallace

Kentucky Educational Development Corp.

In the last two years, the Kentucky Educational Development Corp. (KEDC) has been focused on updating – and in some areas reinventing – its strategic plan. In looking for a leadership model that would be a “next step” from the organization’s previous work with Stephen Covey and John Maxwell resources, KEDC Executive Director Stan Riggs zeroed in on the tools of Ken Blanchard and his associates. Riggs selected Blanchard’s servant leadership model because he was familiar with Blanchard’s teaching, including “The One Minute Manager,” one of the leadership field’s all-time best sellers since publication in 1982.

As a result of the co-op’s studies of Blanchard’s leadership model, Riggs and his team are seeing a shift to “the new KEDC.” With a vision and commitment to helping create great schools, KEDC’s “lessons learned” during this re-invention process could be applied to any school, district or other education organization.

KEDC’s process of taking a comprehensive look inward has included several book studies from Blanchard’s long list of resources on servant leadership. Many books from the Blanchard series are short reads written in the form of stories. All have underlying sub-themes of self-leadership, team building, mentoring and emotional intelligence.

In addition, KEDC, in partnership with the University of Kentucky and the Lexington Chamber of Commerce, brought Blanchard to Lexington in November 2006 to lead a workshop on his leadership model. We invited public school educators and other education stakeholders throughout the state to participate in the event. Approximately 900 attendees took part in the one-day conference.

Learning to serve

In “The Secret,” Blanchard’s definition of serving cuts right to the core:

- S – See the future
- E – Engage and develop others
- R – Reinvent continuously
- V – Value results and relationships
- E – Embody the values

What does such a philosophy mean in real life? During Blanchard’s visit to Lexington, he summed up true, integrity-driven leadership by explaining that it’s simply all about others.

He emphasized the importance of understanding that the people down in the trenches of any organization are the real backbone of the organization. He stressed that how these employees are treated and respected day to day – and how their multiple and diverse talents are utilized – makes all the difference in how an organization operates.

The implications of embracing Blanchard’s leadership principles for any school or school district are huge:

- What if every employee felt supported and empowered as a leader among other leaders and unchained

to develop to full potential?

- What if each parent felt this way?
- What if each student was raised in such a learning culture in every classroom?

Would we see more schools transformed to greatness? Would we see a jump in the percentage of high school graduates going on to successful completion of college or other postsecondary training? Would we see communities being better prepared for successful transition into the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century? Sure we would!

Blanchard’s principles are not complicated. In fact, as he points out, they’ve been around for hundreds of years – but too often not utilized in our organizations.

From page to implementation

Does servant leadership just happen after reading a book or two? No.

Blanchard emphasizes in “Full Steam Ahead” that significant purpose, clear values and a picture of the future should be made a priority of the organization. So, a crucial piece in taking servant leadership from the page to implementation is identifying core values that focus on helping people and changing lives. Then the organization must make the necessary changes so those core values exist and are practices of every employee.

In “Formula 2 + 2” (from Blanchard’s leadership series with other authors), the authors stress the critical importance of all members of the organization being coached and mentored with ongoing accountability. Replacing the traditional annual evaluation with regular praise and feedback about

digms, structure and process.

Before long, they fall back into old patterns, assuming that there is no way to change the habits that have become entrenched over the years. Blanchard offers strategies to prevent this from happening.

In “The One Minute Manager Meets the Monkey,” Blanchard shares a wonderful process on how to be so organized as a corporate body that literally every task, project and initiative are delegated to the person who is most adept at getting that particular job done the most effectively and efficiently. And, that person is then equipped with the training and tools necessary to complete the responsibilities with fulfillment and ownership.

Talk about seeing transformational, second-order change taking place! When all the “monkeys,” or responsibilities, are being taken care of by the right people, magic begins to happen around the office and in the classroom.

So, bottom line: how has the Blanchard servant leadership model benefited KEDC? The action approach from “The Serving Leader” perhaps best sums up the process of change KEDC is embracing:

- Upend the pyramid (Tear down hierarchical “walls.”)
- Raise the bar (Set higher goals.)
- Blaze the trail (Take risks as a boundary-less organization.)
- Build on strength (Do what you do well – but even better.)
- Run to great purpose (Find your niche in improving society – then do it!)

Are we finding this transition from old to new easy? No. It is often very hard and

Blanchard books

The One Minute Manager, Kenneth H. Blanchard; Hardcover; 111 pages; William Morrow; 1982; ISBN: 0688014291.

The One Minute Manager Meets the Monkey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, William Oncken, Hal Burrows; Paperback; 144 pages; William Morrow & Co.; 1991; ISBN: 0688103804.

Full Steam Ahead, Kenneth Blanchard, Jesse Stoner; Hardcover; 144 pages; Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 2003; ISBN: 1576752445.

Formula 2 + 2, Douglas B. Allen, Dwight W. Allen, Kenneth Blanchard; Hardcover; 120 pages; Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 2004; ISBN: 1576753107.

The Secret, Kenneth Blanchard, Mark Miller; Hardcover; 124 pages; Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 2004; ISBN: 1576752895.

The Serving Leader, Ken Jennings, John Stahl-Wert, Kenneth Blanchard; Paperback; 180 pages; Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 2004; ISBN: 1576753085.

Like to recommend a new resource?

Have you read a book or professional article, used new software or visited a Web site you’d like to recommend to other educators? If so, you can reach nearly 54,000 teachers, administrators and education stakeholders by submitting a review of the resource to *Kentucky Teacher* for publication.

To receive information on writing for this publication — content, article length and deadlines — contact the editor by e-mail at kyteacher@education.ky.gov or by postal mail at *Kentucky Teacher*, Kentucky Department of Education, 612 Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, KY 40601.



Photo by Terri White, Kentucky Educational Development Corp.

performance is key to eliminating the all-too-frequent culture of frustrated employees – and unhappy supervisors – who for various reasons are not talking and learning together on a daily basis.

Moving beyond past habits

So often leaders of organizations will make serious attempts to dive into transformational change. However, they may find themselves and their employees getting bogged down with existing para-

frustrating. However, we believe the end result can take our organization from good to great.

For KEDC, the vision is becoming more and more focused as these daily habits channel our employees’ intellectual capital and energy to “helping make schools great.”

Rocky Wallace is the director of Instructional Support for the Kentucky Educational Development Corp. You can reach him at (606) 928-0205, rocky.wallace@kedc.org.



Galelyn McElroy talks with students at Central High School Magnet Career Academy (Jefferson County) about the Bill of Rights and what the document means to their lives more than 200 years after it was adopted.

McElroy is creating good citizens through civics education programs

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

After the American Revolution, Thomas Jefferson cited the chief reason for public education as the need to produce citizens who would “understand political and social issues, participate in civic life, vote wisely, protect their rights and freedoms and keep the nation secure from inside and outside threats.”

Kentucky is one of only 16 states whose Constitution includes a statement regarding the importance of civic education. It reads, “Every Child, regardless of patronage or poverty, geography or location, will receive a world class education to prepare for productive adult life, continuing education, and responsible citizenship.”

Today, the Education Commission of the States suggests, “There is a growing need for schools to produce citizens who have not only knowledge about civil issues, but also a set of values about why citizenship is important and a set of civic skills that gives students a sense of efficacy and a commitment to be active, principled citizens.”

Galelyn McElroy, a civics teacher at Central High School Magnet Career Academy (Jefferson County), agrees that preparing students to be good citizens is part of public education’s role.

“With much instability, conflict and disorder occurring in the world today, it is extremely important for our students to recognize that the underlying values and principles of our Constitution and the Bill of Rights helped this nation to survive and succeed,” McElroy said. “Knowledge of the government, the Constitution and involvement in civic education will ensure the continuation of this great democracy for future generations.”

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), only 26 per-

cent of U.S. high school students demonstrates proficiency in the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are essential to citizenship.

At Central, McElroy is doing her part to improve that statistic. For 13 years, she taught the school’s Legal/Government Services magnet program. She now teaches World Civilization and U.S. History. Last fall, she was one of only three teachers nationally to receive the first American Civic Education Teacher Award.

The award honors elementary and secondary civic education teachers who exhibit a special expertise in teaching about the U.S. Constitution, Congress and public policy at the state and local levels. The Center for Civic Education, the Center on Congress at Indiana University and the National Education Association established the annual award program.

“It was a humbling experience for me to be selected,” McElroy said. “I was very proud to represent my home state of Kentucky and to let the world know that there are high-quality educators and students in Kentucky.”

In addition to Kentucky’s Program of Studies, Central High School offers a pre-college curriculum of specialized magnet programs. The Legal/Government Services Magnet is aimed at keeping students informed about the world, giving them knowledge about government policies and laws, and arming them with the power to express themselves about events occurring around them, McElroy said.

“Students must know their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States,” McElroy said. “We cannot afford to lose any young people to drugs, gangs, poverty, crime, teen pregnancy, illiteracy or indifference.”

Generally, students in the legal/govern-

ment services program study the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the six principles of government, political philosophers, the roots of American government, the American Revolution, landmark Supreme Court cases and the process of the political system.

In addition to classroom activities, students participate in field trips, internships and partnerships provided by local businesses and government agencies. These include the Jefferson County Courthouse, City Hall, the Hall of Justice, the U.S. District Court and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In grade 10, program studies concentrate on the legal system and law practice. Students examine the roles of

judges, juries, attorneys and support personnel such as paralegals. They explore cases involving family law, housing law, consumer law and other areas of civil law pertaining to individual rights and liberties.

Students gain hands-on experience through job shadowing or volunteering in local law firms. McElroy has placed student volunteers in the mayor’s office and other city agencies. Some students have volunteered at local churches and homeless shelters.

The 11th-grade curriculum emphasizes the fundamental purposes, ideals and structures of American government. Students examine the technical, organizational, personal and ethical aspects of the country’s political system.

“I believe that students need to recognize and understand how the United States of America was developed over two hundred years ago,” McElroy said. “In order to do this, students must know the history of our government and our Constitution.”

Eleventh-grade students can gain hands-on experience as volunteers with political campaigns. They may conduct telephone surveys, work at election polls or help register new voters. McElroy’s students also have arranged community forums and debates at the school among local, state and

federal politicians.

The senior level of the program offers aspects of an independent study course. During the year, students must write two research papers: One focuses on a national legal problem; the other on an international legal issue.

Local attorneys voluntarily instruct senior students in the process of legal research. A study of comparative political structures, comparative economics, the United Nations and national security provides background information for the papers.

Seniors may choose to work in a legal or government setting when co-op positions are available. Students have interned in local law firms, the Metro Council and the Metro County Attorney’s Office. “The Legal/Government Services Magnet could not succeed without the support of the Louisville community,” McElroy said. “Community leaders and parents have come together to encourage and assist these young citizens.”

Adults in the community also participate in mentoring programs for students. They help students write resumes and cover letters. They offer tips for job interviews. They also conduct lectures, mini-workshops and student seminars at the school.

In addition to the adult support, McElroy believes that keeping students involved in school and community activities keeps their focus locked on the subject matter. She encourages students to participate in mock legislative programs, debate competitions and mock trials.

Students at Central High School also are encouraged to volunteer for the Teen Court Program. Students are trained as defense or prosecution attorneys and jurors for actual juvenile defendant cases. The student attorneys argue real cases. The jurors recommend real sentences for juvenile defendants who appear before Teen Court.

“This program allows young people to become acquainted with the justice system and helps to prevent their future entanglement in the system,” McElroy said. “Many students return to Central to share their Teen Court attorney or juror experiences with their peers and encourage other students to participate.”

McElroy said all the activities have had a positive impact on her students’ academic growth. Many have received scholarships to college as a result of involvement in the program, she said.

McElroy understands the long-term effects her efforts will have on her students. “They are the future of our nation,” she said, “and the future of our democracy depends on them.”

MORE INFO ...

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To learn more about the 2007 American Civic Education Teacher Award, go to www.civiced.org/pdfs/2007ACETAapp.pdf. March 10 is the deadline for teachers to submit applications to the award program.

To read the executive summary of the Education Commission of the States report, “Every Student A Citizen: Creating the Democratic Self,” go to www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/16/77/1677.pdf.

<http://civicsky.nku.edu> – Civic Literacy Initiative for Kentucky

Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Elementary reading programs help bridge the gap between home and the classroom

By Michelle Beagle

Newport Independent Public Schools

Nearly two years ago, I was hired as reading intervention teacher at A.D. Owens Elementary (Newport Independent). It became my responsibility to take care of the required reading assessments, identify struggling readers, prepare professional development events for teachers and coordinate the school's family literacy events.

To get family literacy activities rolling, I contacted the Campbell County Family Literacy Program. The staff's enthusiasm and helpfulness won my heart from the very beginning. They offered suggestions, gave me literature and offered to help organize the first "Family Reading Event" at our school.

Working with the Family Literacy Program staff helped me realize the urgency: many students who are struggling readers are the offspring of struggling readers.

Educators need to help break the cycle. We need to bridge the gap between home and school. We need not only to help children learn to read, but also to teach their parents how to help them learn to read at home.

Last October, we held our first family literacy event at A.D. Owens Elementary. To help make it happen, I recruited a "cadre of reading leaders" whom I believed to be the strongest reading teachers in each primary grade level.

Our cadre decided the first family reading event would give parents a short lesson about comprehension strategies and then allow them to make a game or learn an activity they could take home and work on with their children.

We held the family reading event the same evening as the schoolwide Halloween party. The students stayed in the gym while a teacher from the cadre read a book. Students also watched a video and completed a story frame and Venn Diagram comparing the book to the video.

The cadre of reading leaders took parents into classrooms and explained a typical day in the guiding reading block for each grade level. Parents made reading games and talked informally with the teachers about reading.

Approximately 40 students and 30 parents attended our first event. I knew that we were on the right track — we were making a difference — teaching the students and their parents!

Our reading leaders continued to plan these family reading events, keeping crafts, games, refreshments and story time a part of each evening.

In December, we focused on writing. Parents learned about the Writing Block. Students received a winter journal with sentence starters and a new pencil.

Our January topic was self-selected reading. Parents learned the importance of reading to their children. The Campbell County Public Library provided winter-themed library books for parents to read with their children.

We planned the February session for working with words. Parents learned about Word Walls, word families and decoding strategies.

In March and May, technology was the focus of our events. Parents were invited to the school computer lab to learn about Web sites they can access at home.

To the disappointment of many, parent and student attendance dropped after the first event. The last five evenings we averaged fewer than 15 people. I just kept reas-



Michelle Beagle, reading intervention teacher, standing, reviews literacy materials with A.D. Owens Elementary teachers who make up the cadre of reading leaders she relies on to help plan and staff family literacy events at the school.

suring the cadre that if we reached one family our efforts were worth it.

While planning the family reading events, I discovered that the local family literacy center had developed two programs we could use at our school. A six-week program, "Passport to Reading," provided short classes for parents on topics from parent conferences to homework. The second program helped parents learn how to choose appropriate KET programs for their children.

We held each program twice. We rewarded parent attendance to each with a book for their child.

A wonderful thing happened! Parents who attended the "Passport to Reading" program returned for the KET program. They also came to some of the family reading events.

We were building capacity! We were making a difference!

Next, I contacted Joan Johnsen, the children's librarian at the Campbell County Public Library. Last fall, she reserved Thursdays at the public library for grade-level stories and crafts for our primary students and their parents. I made sure students had library cards and were using them.

Teachers from the reading leaders cadre attended the public library story times. They helped students check out books and do crafts. These were very memorable events, and they made a difference!!

Last school year, our faculty decided to write a Mathematics to Achieve grant application, which also has a family literacy component. I decided before we were awarded this grant that the mathematics intervention teacher and I would team up to hold family literacy/mathematics events.

This school year, the mathematics intervention teacher has developed a cadre of mathematics leaders, and I continue working with the cadre of reading leaders. Since I am also the PTA teacher leader this year, we coordinate all of our family literacy/mathematics events with PTA meetings.

Each month I am asking a specific grade level to perform choral readings, songs, poems, etc., at the meetings. This is bringing parents and their children to the meetings. Each month, we will reach a different population of parents, as well as those who return regularly for the literacy/mathematics events.

For example, in October, our early primary students performed favorite nursery rhymes. After that, parents and students could participate in more than 15 nursery rhyme-themed activities that focused on reading, writing, science, music and communication skills. More than 30 families attended.

Our January event was "Teaching Math Through Literacy" using selected books and activities. In February, the "Cat in the Hat" visited. We have our spring events planned.

Over the past year and a half, educators and parents have come together for the good of A.D. Owens Elementary students to bridge the gap between our school and their homes.

We have made a difference, but we are definitely not finished. We continue to work to meet the needs of our struggling readers one family at a time.

Michelle Beagle is the reading intervention teacher at A.D. Owens Elementary (Newport Independent Schools). Contact her about family literacy activities at (859) 202-3011, michelle.beagle@newport.kyschools.us.



Warne, Melissa and Kandace Sipples read together as part of one of the literacy/mathematics center activities during the January Family Reading/Mathematics event at A.D. Owens Elementary.

PODCASTING from Page 1

munities in learning. The advantage of podcasting is that it allows learning to take place virtually anywhere at any time.

Kathie Wrightson, National Board Certified Teacher and gifted/talented resource specialist, says when she introduced the idea of podcasting to students at East Middle School (Shelby County), "They were ecstatic." Most of the students already knew about the technology.

"Let's face it, these students don't know a life that doesn't include some element of technology," she said.

Wrightson said her students do the majority of the work for the podcasts – writing, designing and producing the programs. "I wouldn't have it any other way," she said.

At Bernheim Middle, students also are involved in producing the podcasts. Students record and edit the video and audio files. Murphy posts them to the school server.

"When I realized what we were going to do, I was in disbelief," said Jacob Bradley, an 8th-grade student at Bernheim Middle School. "The process is exciting. There are endless possibilities."

Wrightson says neither students nor teachers must be "techies" to use podcast technology. However, she does suggest enlisting help from the school or district technology coordinator to get started.

Murphy says there are many resources for teachers to use to produce podcasts. He says a microphone, computer and Internet access are all it takes to get started. According to Murphy, all the software needed is free and available online.

Wrightson says teachers can utilize podcasting in a variety of ways. She says the format is especially suited to performance events.

"Think about how special a child feels when she sees her work published in such a positive light," Wrightson said.

In Kenton County schools, primary through high school students are producing podcasts and vodcasts (video podcasts). Topics range from school announcements to how nanotechnology is used to keep people healthy and safe.

"Students take ownership of their learning if they produce a podcast," said Murphy. Students at Bernheim Middle School already have produced a variety of podcast episodes including band performances, class poetry readings and PowerPoint presentations. Students also have discussed their career choices based on the new "Kentucky Career Cruising" Web site and have performed original music compositions.

Free classroom podcast resources

There are a number of ways to listen to and access podcasts. The easiest way is probably through Apple iTunes, which can be downloaded for Macintosh or PC computers for free at www.apple.com/itunes/download.

Other podcatcher applications allow different options for subscribing and listening. Here are some of the most popular:

Juice: <http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net>

Doppler: www.dopplerradio.net

Odeo: <http://odeo.com>

Yahoo Podcast Directory: <http://podcasts.yahoo.com>

WARNING: The quality and content of podcasts varies greatly. Some contain explicit material that may or may not be noted in the podcast directory. Be sure to review any podcasts that you plan to either refer to your students or use in your classroom.

Kentucky student podcast sites

To hear or view podcasts produced by students at Bernheim Middle School (Bullitt County), go to ww2.bullittschools.org/bms/bmspodcasts.htm or go to the iTunes Music Store and type "Bruincast" in the search box.

To view podcasts produced by students at Shelby County East Middle School, go to www.shelby.kyschools.us/East/east.html. Follow the link for "podcasting."

The Kenton County student-produced podcasts, as well as a list of podcasting resources for teachers, are available at www.kenton.k12.ky.us/tr/podcasting.

Murphy says future podcasts will include science lessons, mathematics mini-lessons and social studies lectures. "Most students are motivated to do their best when they know they are being recorded. What more can you ask of students than their best?" Murphy added.

"Students think it is cool to produce digital content from school and go home and listen to it from their computers or iPods. And parent reaction to the band concert was great! Family members and friends who are unable to attend can download the podcast and hear or watch the students at their convenience," he said.

Students and parents can access podcasts from the Bernheim Middle School Web site. They also can subscribe to the free podcasts by signing up through RSS (Really Simple Syndication), which automatically downloads new podcasts as they become available to their Internet-ready computers.

Teachers can take advantage of pre-produced podcasts to supplement what they teach in the classroom. Discovery, "National Geographic," NASA, "The Princeton Review" and "Scientific American" are among the countless podcast resources available free online. There also are teacher-training podcasts available on topics such as podcasting and SMARTboard lessons.

"Blending this kind of positive, expressive media with education can help motivate some reluctant learners in ways that other strategies might not," said Wrightson.

Murphy agrees. "Students with different learning styles benefit from podcasting because they can see it, say it and hear it. When students finish, they have an authentic product they can be proud of, something for the world to hear or watch," he said.



Bernheim Middle School 6th-grade students Kaleb Duckett, left, and Tyler Loyd read a two-voice poem in their language arts class that later became part of a poetry podcast, which their families and friends could access on the school's Web site.

Photo submitted by Bernheim Middle School

MATHEMATICS from Page 4

expand and improve the services of the high school mathematics department. He has started a Peer Tutoring Program and is working with the school's tech prep committee to use time in the computer applications class for freshmen to work on Algebra skills online.

McCree has developed a mathematics lending library for teachers at Cooper-Whiteside Elementary. "Since we have started coaching, teachers are exploring math options," she said. "They have started small group math remediation centers, cooperative groups, good questions and more use of manipulatives."

This school year, there are 67 mathematics coaches working with approximately 800 teachers in all grade levels in 28 Kentucky public school districts.

"We are our own best resource," McCree said. "When teachers come together to think, discuss and problem-solve, the students win."

The mathematics coach at Pendleton County High School agrees. "Coaches are not theoretical practitioners who haven't seen an adolescent in years," Christoph said. "We're right there in the trenches every day with our colleagues. The advantage is that

we have the extra time and the training to look a little further down the road, to delve a little deeper.

"There is a special feeling when you help a student learn a new concept," added Christoph. "It is an even better feeling when you help classroom teachers reach their goals, develop as professionals and become even better teachers."

The center is now taking applications from P-12 public school teachers to become mathematics coaches in Kentucky. Applications are available online at the center's Web site (www.kentuckymathematics.org). The deadline to apply is March 16. Successful applicants will be notified by early April.

MORE INFO ...

www.kentuckymathematics.org

Gary Palmer, director of Coaching Programs at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, (859) 572-7693 palmerg@nku.edu

Alice Gabbard, director of Diagnostic Intervention Programs at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, (859) 572-7691, gabbardal@nku.edu



Photo by Kathy Samples, Shelby County Public Schools

Tymber Redd, left, and Brandy Ridgeway convert video taken by other Shelby County East Middle School students into a vodcast (video podcast) that will be posted on the school Web site.

STATE from Page 1

The board's goal is to merge items that align into the KCCT in the spring of 2009.

A Kentucky scale combining ACT/KCCT items would be used to calculate an academic index for accountability that would be applied in 2008-09 and from that point forward. This would include an ACT index at the high school level for 2008-09 and in the future, computed from both PLAN and ACT scores.

In other business, the state board agreed to accept Interim Education Commissioner Kevin Noland's recommendation that the authority of school councils at Holmes Junior/Senior High School (Covington Independent School District) and Iroquois Middle School (Jefferson County) be transferred to each district's superintendent. Authority may be restored to each school council when the school meets its goal for a two-year accountability cycle.

The board agreed to allow the school council at Holmes to act in an advisory capacity until authority has been restored to the council. The school council at Iroquois will not be allowed any advisory authority. The recommendations stemmed from recent state-mandated scholastic audits conducted at both schools.

The board reissued a 1995 resolution reaf-

firming its position on school mascots and symbols. The resolution states that mascots, nicknames and other school symbols should represent the highest ideals of human dignity and help all students feel welcome and included in the life of the school. With the reissue of this resolution, the board again urged schools to review the appropriateness of their symbols and mascots and recommended that schools and districts abandon the use of symbols and mascots that are offensive to any group of people.

Department staff presented an update on mathematics initiatives in place throughout the state. The board viewed a video highlighting the work in several schools that have received the state Mathematics Achievement Fund grant. These schools are using mathematics intervention teachers to work with primary students who are struggling in mathematics. (Learn more about this program on Page 4.)

Additionally, staff from Jefferson County Public Schools briefed the board on the district's local mathematics initiative funded by a four-year, \$25 million grant from the GE Foundation. The grant supports a comprehensive collaboration among schools, businesses and community leaders.

It aims to improve student achievement

in mathematics and science. The goal is also to increase the percentage of graduates enrolling in college from 64 percent to 71 percent over the four-year implementation of the grant.

The board also continued discussions on dropout prevention and persistence to graduation. In December, the board began reviewing the extent and nature of this issue in Kentucky. The discussion at February's meeting was a more in-depth examination of national research and strategies in place at the local level.

Representatives from Corbin Independent Schools and Paris High School shared with the board strategies they are using to encourage students to come to school and stay in school. Some of these included student-run enterprises, a freshman center, the Jobs for Kentucky Graduates program and alternative pathways to graduation.

Based on national research and previous board discussions, department staff proposed five comprehensive strategies intended to increase persistence to graduation. The board will review these recommendations and discuss any regulatory changes needed to implement any of the strategies at a future meeting.

The board also heard from the Kentucky

High School Athletic Association (KHSAA). In a review of the proposed changes in the KHSAA bylaws, several citizens spoke both in favor of and in opposition to Proposal 2.

The proposal would require each KHSAA-member school to have a defined athletic territory of feeder schools with defined restrictions and exceptions from which to draw student athletes. Students attending schools outside that territory would be ineligible to play any school sport during the first year attending that school. The change would be effective with the 7th-grade class of 2008-09.

The board will review the proposed amendments and comments heard at the February meeting. It may take action on this issue at its April meeting.

The next meeting of the board will be March 7 at Carter Caves State Resort Park in Grayson. The board's April meeting will be in Frankfort April 4 and 5.

MORE INFO ...

www.education.ky.gov - Click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the left-hand menu. Scroll down to "State Board of Education" and click for state board information.

TASK from Page 1

and require developmental student intervention programs in colleges

- create an integrated accountability system (P-16 and including adult education) that is tied to performance funding and focused on student success
- fund infrastructure improvement to better support underprepared students through high-quality developmental courses and teacher training
- align college readiness standards and tie to educator professional development so that P-12 teachers, adult educators and college developmental educators receive training to prepare all students for college-level content
- better link educator preparation in colleges for P-12 teachers and school leaders to the training needed to their students for college
- develop early student interventions that target middle and high school grades and the high school senior year to accelerate student learning

"These recommendations outline a comprehensive strategy to tackle the challenges Kentucky faces in the area of college preparation and success," said Tom Layzell, council president. The plan calls on the Kentucky Department of Education, public school districts, adult educators, state universities and the Kentucky General Assembly to implement the majority of the recommendations by 2008.

With the report's release, Kentucky is again being recognized on the national level for progressive programs to improve access in education. National experts who consulted with the task force and reviewed the final report agree that the report's inclusive and systematic approach to addressing the issue of developmental education is commendable.

The full report and more information about the Developmental Education Task Force are available on the council Web site at www.cpe.ky.gov/committees/develop_ed.

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Frankfort, KY 40601



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Lighting the 'Lamp of Learning'

Riley Pineiroa turns on the Lamp of Learning to start the day off right for students, faculty and staff at Foster Heights Elementary (Nelson County). Each morning, everyone in the school gathers to say the Pledge of Allegiance, sing the school song and light the Lamp of Learning, which symbolizes the burning desire to learn something new each day, says Principal Gail Kamer. When staff members see a student showing acts of kindness, following school rules and being serious about learning, they can enter the student's name in a drawing for the honor of lighting the lamp.

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Rebeca Blessing
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Instructional Device Upgrade project begins

An initiative to improve educational technology and help advance student learning through new instructional technologies is under way in Kentucky. The Instructional Device Upgrade (IDU) project is designed to allow districts to replace and purchase additional desktop, laptop and tablet personal computers used by students and teachers.

To support the project, the General Assembly granted \$50 million in bond funding last year to provide modern instructional devices to schools and districts throughout the state from now through June 2008.

An advisory committee made up of district assessment coordinators, assistive learning specialists, superintendents, principals, technology resource teachers, students and district technology representatives has been working in conjunction with the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Internal Administration and Support and the Office of Education Technology to ensure district needs are met through the project. The committee's recommendations included providing districts with flexibility in choice of vendor and type of instructional devices.

The department has negotiated with current Kentucky Education Technology Systems (KETS) vendors to achieve a savings of approximately 25 percent over current educational pricing on hardware. Compared to pre-existing KETS specs and pricing, IDU pricing will deliver more powerful devices at a high cost savings for the districts, said project manager Christine Markert. In some instances the IDU prices represent a 50 percent discount over retail.

Downloadable files that list models available through the IDU project, along with upgrade and warranty options and contract prices, are available on the department's Web site. Districts will be able to order online directly from vendors' Web sites.

Purchases are restricted to models approved for funding and are limited to the district's allotment of the money set aside by the General Assembly for the IDU project. As an added benefit, students, staff and faculty are eligible to purchase most of the units for personal use.

According to David Couch, associate

commissioner of the Office of Education Technology, the IDU project, along with network communication improvements, will help provide an essential foundation for many other key technology-based instructional and administrative initiatives such as online administration of the Kentucky Core Content Test, the Kentucky Instructional Data System (KIDS), the next generation Student Information System (SIS) and a Web-enabled individual learning plan (ILP) for students.

To access the IDU price lists, go to www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+Resources/Technology/Purchasing/Contract+Order+Forms/IDU+Pricing.htm.

school board members.

According to the e-mail survey, when asked how technology in the classroom helped increase educational opportunities for students, more than 92 percent said it helps students become more engaged in learning.

Home access to the Internet for low-income students continues to be a serious issue throughout the nation. Nearly 71 percent of the respondents said it was a problem in their districts, compared to 69 percent in 2004 and 78 percent in 2005.

If school districts received additional technology funding, 72 percent said they would spend it on classroom instruction and 55 percent said they would use it for

year courses before taking second-year courses. All courses are appropriate for both certified and classified members.

Sessions begin at 4 p.m. June 8 and end at approximately 4 p.m. June 9. The courses, course materials, hotel rooms and meals Friday evening through Saturday lunch will be provided free to KEA members.

Registration forms are available online at www.kea.org.

Contact: Anne Bomar, (800) 231-4532, Ext. 324, abomar@kea.org

School administrators conference set for July

Registration has begun for the Kentucky Association of School Administrators' 38th annual conference July 18-20 at the Galt House in Louisville. The theme of this year's conference is "Extreme Commitment: Passionate Leadership."

Best-selling author and motivational speaker Mark Sanborn is the keynote speaker. Sanborn is the author of "The Fred Factor," which demonstrates how organizations and individuals can create new value for others through dedication, passion and creativity. His newest book "You Don't Need a Title to Be a Leader" will be published soon and available to KASA members prior to public sales.

Conference participants earn six hours EILA (Effective Instructional Leadership Act) credit.

Conference details and registration are available online at www.kasa.org.

Male teachers vanishing from today's classroom

If you've hired teachers recently at your school, it probably comes as no surprise that the number of male applicants is significantly lower than female applicants.

According to the National Education Association's "Rankings and Estimates" report for the 2004-05 school year, fewer than one in four, or 24.5 percent, of the nation's instructors were men. That's the biggest gender imbalance in 40 years. In Kentucky, only 21 percent of the state's 42,683 teachers are male.

Principals around the state and the nation say the biggest factor in drawing men into the teaching profession and keeping them in the classroom is salary. Statistics from the Kentucky Department of Education show that in 2005-06 the average teacher salary was \$43,275 in Kentucky.

In an effort to address the salary issue for all teachers, the 2006 Kentucky Legislature voted to boost teacher salaries over the next two years to bring them up to the average of surrounding states.

Some principals say when it comes to good teaching, gender doesn't matter. They say what matters is if someone is a good teacher and can get the material across to students and help them understand it. However, some research shows troubled boys may do better academically in classes conducted by male teachers who can serve as positive role models.



Immersed in German history

Twelve Kentucky social studies educators became Atlantik-Brücke Fellows after learning more about modern Germany and its people during a study trip to Germany earlier this school year. Standing in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, first built in 1791 and later incorporated into the wall that divided the city during Communist rule, are Margaret Van Hook (Fayette County), front row, left, Amy Galloway (Fayette County), Patricia Scott (Bowling Green Independent), Nureka Duncan (Fayette County), Robin Chandler (Kentucky Department of Education), Shannon Kederis (Jefferson County) and back row, left, William Pope (Fayette County), Leslie Mills (Dawson Springs Independent), Jay Blavatt (Newport Independent), Rick Daniel (Jefferson County), Mark Kopp (Kentucky Department of Education) and Paula Azzarito (Fayette County). Applications for and information about the fall 2007 study trip to Germany will be posted on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site during March.

Survey finds funding and integration are biggest technology challenges

For the third year in a row, funding for technology and integrating that technology into the classroom are the biggest challenges that school districts face in the area of technology, according to a survey issued by the National School Boards Association (NSBA) in late 2006.

Nearly 50 percent ranked funding and 45 percent ranked integrating technology in the classroom as their biggest challenges when it came to technology. Seventeen percent ranked proving that technology benefits student learning as the biggest challenge they faced.

Survey respondents included technology specialists, teachers, administrators and

staff professional development.

Complete survey results can be found on the NSBA Web site. Go to www.nsba.org and enter "technology survey" in the search box.

Professional development on leadership skills

The Kentucky Education Association (KEA) is offering a two-day professional development opportunity focusing on leadership skills June 8-9 in Louisville.

Four first-year sessions will be offered (sending communications, receiving communications, communication styles and leadership) along with a new second-year curriculum (developing greater self-esteem, assertiveness, managing change and managing conflict).

Participants are encouraged to take first-

Mason County educators create a 21st century school

By Faun S. Fishback

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Construction of the Mason County Intermediate School (end of primary through 5th grade) gave Mason County Public Schools administrators and elementary school staff the opportunity to design and build a school for teaching and learning in the 21st century. The school opened in January 2006.

Architect Gary R. Scott's probing questions about what educators wanted in the building

ion about every detail – from the color of furniture to windows to how the student cubbies were designed – in person, through e-mail and on special forms," said Michelle Scilley, an exiting primary teacher who served on the planning team for the new school. "Everyone felt like they had a part in the building design."

Built for instruction

Creating the intermediate school was an intentional effort to increase communication among

two subjects.

Each triad has its own common area for announcements and activities. Teachers designed the classrooms so that each has a sink and water fountain, said Scilley, a 17-year veteran teacher. Science classrooms are slightly larger to accommodate experiments and hands-on activities. The mathematics classrooms are equipped with SMARTboards, but the technology is shared within each triad.

Each classroom has a projec-

for students during a classroom assignment.

Space for every activity

Arts and humanities teachers created a large, multipurpose room for music education, orchestra, chorus and dance. The art room has its own kiln.

A stage that opens to the large commons area on one side and the gym on the other allows performances for small groups, students in one grade level or the entire school.

Students can receive special education services in classrooms adjacent to their triads. The locations let special education teachers provide specialized instruction alongside classroom teachers in the triads, said Greta Stanfield, the district special education coordinator. Occupational therapists helped design the therapy room used by students with physical impairments.

Using the sunshine

Mason County educators called for intentional use of natural lighting in each classroom. Brain research shows that natural lighting helps students see better, stay focused, process information better and stay healthier, said Liz Pettit, district curriculum and instructional supervisor.

The school has banks of windows in classrooms, common areas and at the end of hallways.

Large windows open classrooms to three courtyards in the core of the building and let natural light in learning areas.

The courtyards also serve as outdoor learning space in warm weather. The school's geothermal heating and cooling system provides opportunities to teach first-hand about environmental responsibilities and energy-saving measures.

A large gym provides space for scheduled physical fitness classes. In bad weather, students can run and play organized games in the smaller auxiliary gym without interrupting the physical educa-



The cafeteria offers a place for students to socialize during lunch with a panoramic view of the school's surroundings.



Fifth-grade social studies teacher Sheina Kegley easily incorporates technology in her teaching since each teacher has a laptop computer, projection unit, document camera and DVD and VCR equipment in the classroom.

and how they wanted to teach sparked all kinds of discussions, said Kelly Middleton, associate superintendent. Instead of thinking about paint colors and carpet samples, administrators and staff began to focus on creating a school environment that would help students learn, aid instruction and make students, parents and the community feel welcome in the building.

A lot of work went into the early design of the \$15.2 million facility, according to Kermit Belcher, who is district technology coordinator and works alongside Middleton to manage the district's facilities. "We looked at what we wanted instructionally, then worked backward to make it happen. We've really seen a big pay-off in doing it that way," he said.

"We asked for everyone's opin-

the district's elementary teachers. Until last January, preschool and primary students attended one school, and 4th and 5th graders attended another. Belcher said working in the same building has made upper primary teachers more aware of how their instruction prepares 4th and 5th graders for what they need to know.

Each grade level (3, 4 and 5) has its own wing in the building. Grade levels are set up using the triad concept, Associate Superintendent Middleton said, which creates smaller learning communities within the school of nearly 650 students.

Teachers work in teams of three in adjacent classrooms. Each teaches reading and writing plus one other content area (science, social studies or mathematics). Students change classes for

tion unit linked to the teacher's laptop computer and other electronic gear, such as a document camera and DVD and VCR equipment, Belcher said.

Teachers designed a common workroom at each grade level, complete with additional storage, a copier/printer and worktables. There is a room dedicated for parent/teacher conferences and teacher team meetings.

It was a given that the building would have state-of-the-art technology, the district technology coordinator said. Wireless network access is available in all classrooms, the computer lab and the library media center, Belcher added.

Each classroom has two student computers. However, teachers can check out a mobile computer lab to provide laptops

tion schedule.

"We wanted to build a student- and teacher-friendly building focused on learning," said Superintendent Timothy Moore, "and we've accomplished that. The challenge for our district now is to make sure these 3rd, 4th and 5th graders go into (existing) middle and high school learning environments that are equal to or better than this."

MORE INFO ...

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Mason County Elementary has wireless Internet access from all classrooms, a computer lab and the library media center where these students are doing research for a class project.